

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 07955 060700Z

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4634

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 7955

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJECT: SCANDAL HITS WHITLAM MINISTRY

1. SUMMARY: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER CAIRNS ANNOUNCED INTENT APPOINT MISS JUNI MOROSI AS HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY HAS PRECIPITATED A POLITICAL UPROAR IN AUSTRALIA. THE PARLIAMENTARY PRESS GALLERY BELIEVES THAT IT MAY RESULT IN SENATOR MURPHY'S RESIGNATION AS ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THAT IT HAS WEAKENED THE ALP'S CLAIM THAT IT IS A PARTY OF PRINCIPLE. END SUMMARY.

2. MISS JUNI MOROSI'S PROJECTED APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER CAIRNS' PRIVATE SECRETARY PROVOKED HEATED PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE, NEGATIVE EDITORIALS AND SENSATIONAL PRESS STORIES. PRESS AND OPPOSITION POLITICIANS CLAIM THAT MISS MOROSI HAD FEW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR HER PROPOSED NEW POSITION WHICH WOULD HAVE PAID A-\$12,500 A YEAR.

3. THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING HER APPOINTMENT WAS COMPOUNDED BY THE FACT THAT SHE HAS CLOSE PERSONAL TIES TO ATTORNEY GENERAL SENATOR MURPHY'S WIFE. SENATOR MURPHY ADDED TO HIS PROBLEMS BY WRITING A LETTER TO THE MINISTER FOR THE CAPITAL TERRITORY, IN WHICH HE ASKED THAT MISS MOROSI, "A MOST ENGAGING NEW EMPLOYEE" BE GIVEN A LOW COST GOVERNMENT FLAT TO WHICH SHE HAD NO IMMEDIATE ENTITLEMENT. A COPY OF THIS LETTER FELL INTO THE HANDS OF A LIBERAL MP. THE PRESS CLAIMS THERE IS SEVEN YEAR WAITING LIST  
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PAGE 02 CANBER 07955 060700Z

FOR SUCH FLATS.

4. MURPHY WAS FURTHER DAMAGED WHEN IT WAS REVEALED THAT HE HAD APPOINTED MISS MOROSI'S HUSBAND, MR. DAVID DITCHBURN, TO THE AUSTRALIAN FILM BOARD AT A SALARY OF A\$1,000; THIS POSITION ENTAILS ATTENDING SOME TEN MEETINGS A YEAR. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT MR. DITCHBURN'S QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS JOB THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FILM BOARD SAID THAT HE WAS A CULTURED GENTLEMAN WHO HAD SEEN A LOT OF FILMS.

5. MORE FUEL WAS ADDED TO THE FIRE WHEN IT WAS REVEALED THAT MISS MOROSI AND HER PRESENT HUSBAND WERE INVOLVED IN TWO BUSINESS DEALS WHICH HAVE GONE BANKRUPT AND ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE NEW SOUTH WALES CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION.

6. MISS MOROSI IS A STRIKING 41 YEAR OLD WOMAN WHOSE ALLEGED LIAISON WITH DR. CAIRNS HAS STIRRED SPECULATION IN THE CANBERRA GOSSIP MILL FOR SEVERAL MONTHS.

7. THE SUM TOTAL OF ALL THESE STORIES, CHARGES AND COUNTER CHARGES IS THAT OPPOSITION POLITICIANS, THE PRESS AND MORALISTS OF ALL STRIPES HAVE HAD A FIELD DAY. TODAY'S PRESS CARRIES REPORTS THAT SENATOR MURPHY WITH MISS MOROSI'S ASSISTANCE IRREGULARLY SECURED IMMIGRATION PERMITS FOR HIS FILIPINO MAID AND HER TWO ADULT DAUGHTERS. PRESS REPORTS ALSO CLAIM THAT MISS MOROSI HAS BEEN CARRIED IMPROPERLY ON VIP AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS AND BEEN ALLOWED THE IMPROPER USE OF COMMONWEALTH CARS.

8. THIS AFFAIR HAS SHAKEN THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT'S IMAGE AS A GOVERNMENT OF PRINCIPLE. WHILE IT MAY DAMAGE DR. CAIRNS' REPUTATION. ATTORNEY GENERAL MURPHY MAY BE THE MAIN POLITICAL LOSER. HIS LETTER REQUESTING A FLAT FOR MISS MOROSI, HIS APPOINTMENT OF HER HUSBAND TO THE FILM BOARD, HIS LONG STANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COUPLE, AND THE ASSERTED CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE IMMIGRATION INTO AUSTRALIA OF HIS FILIPINO MAID ARE ALL POTENTIAL COUNTS AGAINST HIM. MOREOVER, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE IN RECESS NEXT WEEK WHILE THE SENATE WILL BE IN SESSION. JOURNALISTS ASSURE US THAT OPPOSITION SENATORS HAVE BEEN PRIMED WITH A LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 CANBER 07955 060700Z

SENATOR MURPHY RELATING TO HIS ASSOCIATION WITH MISS MOROSI WHICH THE PRESS HAS HERETOFORE BEEN UNABLE TO PRINT BECAUSE OF AUSTRALIA'S STRICT LIBEL LAWS. IF THE QUESTIONS ARE ASKED IN THE SENATE THE PRESS MAY PRINT THEM. THE OPPOSITION'S OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE WOULD BE TO FORCE A GOVERNMENT BACKED INQUIRY INTO THE MOROSI APPOINTMENT; BUT ITS REAL GOAL WOULD BE FORCE SENATOR MURPHY TO RESIGN AS ATTORNEY GENERAL. SIMPSON

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